

AS THE TRAIN ROLLS BY

POETRY FROM A GREAT PEACE MARCH
FOR
GLOBAL NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

BY MICHAEL KRIEGER





Each of us should do something impossible at least once.

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c 1987



\$5.00

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Our march lives on in many forms. "Collective Vision", several musicians from various points in the United States who met and performed while on the march, continues to inspire through original peace and justice music. Cassettes and booking information:

Collective Vision
2913 Warrington Rd.
Shaker Heights, OH 44120
(216)921-9210

Cathy Zheutlin, an award-winning cameraperson, filmed our march in its entirety. "The Peace Film", presently being edited with an October, 1987 target date for completion, is in need of funds and contacts for distribution.

The Peace Film
8489 West Third Street, Suite 53
Los Angeles, CA 90048
(213)653-3519



This book is dedicated to:

My search for inner peace. It is, therefore, dedicated to all people of our world.

JUST LAST WEEK

Just last week, I walked into Washington,
District of Columbia
Walked with friends and the unfamiliar
Walked through propaganda
Beyond concern

Called out to the Washington monument
And to its reflection in the candlelit pool
My words were *Understanding, honesty and love*
My intonation and the language of my body spoke more eloquently:

I have traveled across this land
I am tired, but hopeful
I have done what I can and will do more
But I am frustrated
Listen to those who have gently cradled a dream in their hands
While their feet moved to inspire:

Peace is not merely a priority
It is a responsibility
Do not expect to be carried on this journey
Take your shoes
Find your path
Make peace

Teachers, particularly my 9th grade english teacher at Thompson Junior High School in Southfield, Michigan. Through studies of popular music of the day and poets of the past, Mr. Sherman ignited my appreciation for the written word. He called one of my first poems "Brilliant", and the door was opened. Is there a more important profession than that of teacher?

Those who walked, walk, and will walk for peace.



FACIAL HAIR
and its implications for the modern relationship

Folks on my television
Discussing facial hair
And its implications for the modern relationship
Seems timely
With folks suffering ill-treatment all over the world
Malnourishment
Maleducation
Malhousing
More wars than ever
On a planet threatened with total destruction
Via nuclear war
And
On television
In one of the two countries
Displaying the most powerful weaponry
And the most feeble diplomacy
Facial hair
And its implications for the modern relationship



WHAT IS(N'T) "POST PEACE MARCH"?

It is **not** a breakfast cereal.
It is making more money on your first 1987 paycheck than you did in all of 1986.
It is cursing your tie and razor every morning.
It is **not** easy.
It is a strong dislike for small-talk.
It is **not** very accepting of make-up or high heels.
It is **not** very stable.
It is a new appreciation for long hair and tie dyes.
It is yearning for open spaces and corn fields.
It is arguing with concrete.
It is walking and walking, with no destination but the past.
It is sleeping on the floor, even when there's a *bed* available.
It is peering out office windows.
It is the inadequacy of the handshake.
It is the absence of the backrub.
It is an awareness of a society lacking in hugs.
It is **not** being surrounded by politically-informed people.
It is **not** being welcomed into strangers' homes.
It is saying "fine" when asked, "How are you?"
It is **not** being "fine".
It is enduring questions like, "What did you accomplish?" and statements like, "I would **never** do something like **that**!"
It is feeling silly about constantly reminiscing.

It is better now than it was in December.
It is going to take some time.

Foreword

On March 1st, 1986, hundreds of us left Los Angeles on foot, headed for Washington, D.C. in support of peace and global nuclear disarmament. Two weeks later, the money ran out.

Stalled in the Mojave Desert for three weeks, we reflected upon what had brought us to the march: Our concern with the state of the world. Our hope for the future of Humankind. Our desire to spread hope throughout our land and our world; to let others know they weren't alone; that others cared.

We found strength in each other. We found courage in ourselves. We found joy in the beauty of the desert and in the challenge before us. Our predicament became a celebration. We walked on.

Prepared to teach, we became students. Full of fire and a "hurry up and save the world" mentality, we learned patience. Fresh from offices and cars, we smelled, touched, tasted, heard and viewed our beautiful planet as few people do.

It has been called "The Great Peace March for Global Nuclear Disarmament". Nope. It was *a* great peace march. There have been and will be many others. The experience was great; We were merely fortunate. We hope the story of our march will inspire greatness in others. In *you*...



AFTER THOUGHTS.....



CONVERSATION FROM A GREAT PEACE MARCH, THEN AND NOW

I can't believe this is finally happening!

I can't believe it's almost over.

I don't know about these people.

I love these folks.

I don't know if my legs will make it.

Feel how hard my legs are!

Do we have to sleep in tents?

Do we get to keep our tents?

How far is camp?

How far is camp?

Is there peanut butter in this line?

I'll never eat peanut butter again!

I felt helpless.

I feel powerful.

I felt insignificant.

I feel so special.

Where are you from?

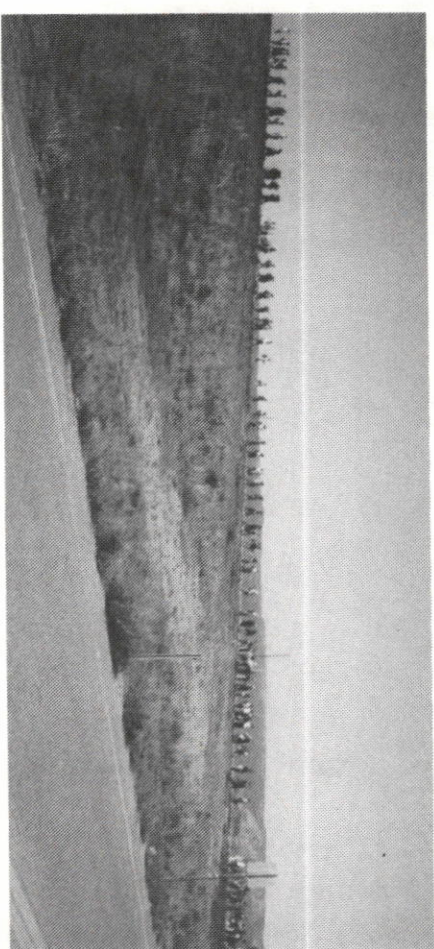
Where are you going?

What were you doing?

What will you do?

Hello. What's your name?

Good-bye, my friend.



DIPLOMACY'S CALL

On a distant land
Ears burn
from the shrill sound
of
Diplomacy's call
Daily decisions
differ greatly
from those which
burden
Our American lives

Maryland, Autumn day

Mud at my feet
Lush grass in the field,
Disappearing into yellow, golden, auburn, and barren trees
Which reach up and smile at the grey clouds
Drifting in the direction of the homes
On the hill in the distance
On this Maryland, Autumn day

Glen Helen

Flute plays, moth dances
Months ago, what were the chances
Moth would ever know her song
We would know this friendship strong

Voices sing, all are walking
Blessed is our time for talking
Dialogue that's never tiring
Common bond that's most inspiring

Path ends, life advances
Years from now, what are the chances
Friendship will extend beyond
Strengthened by a common bond



This Gift We've Named "Earth"

This gift we've named "Earth"
Has been wrapped since its birth
In blue paper, with bright orange bow
No gadget could measure
The worth of this treasure
As given by God long ago
To the first generation
Who used this creation
And passed it along to the next
Then likewise and so on
This pattern did go on
And now God must be quite perplexed
For this generation
And this and that nation
Have gradually built up their power
The right and the wrong
Wouldn't matter for long
For we all would be gone in an hour
Let us take time to think.....
And remember the gifts
We have loved, but destroyed in the past
With a chance to restore
And enjoy them once more
We would guard them so that they would last
The "Earth" must not perish
This gift we must cherish
With future inhabitants, share
For the "Earth" is no toy
That is ours to destroy
We've the strength to avoid, not repair

cousin bob

I hadn't seen Cousin Bob since Greg's wedding
Now he's Cousin *Robert*
He used to watch professional wrestling on T.V.
Now he gives body massage
And dances *ballet*
He looks beautiful in the heart of New York
Looks like he'd belong anywhere
He's a wonderful sight
He's a warm hug

We went out for falafel tonight
I got feta cheese, but I didn't eat it
I never knew feta cheese was that sharp!
He pigged out and I paid
'cause he's in debt and I love him
Isn't it great that certain relationships are the same,
regardless of distance and time?
Ours is well-preserved
Everyone in the family thinks Cousin Robert should
write a book
He's "done it all"
He'll always be Cousin *Bob* to me



New York street woman

She's an old woman
Probably a sweet woman
Eyes crossed, singing to herself
In front of St. John the Divine
On a Sunday, New York night
I didn't want to be one of those
So I smiled
She shrugged, turned, and walked away, singing
Now I'm in the quaint coffee shop across the street
Eating my little cookies
Warm and cozy
I hate that some of us have such hard lives
How close to parity can we possibly ever come?
Am I part of a new, effective movement?
Am I part of an old, foolish series of failures?
Am I just part of the problem?
When do I stop eating little cookies
And writing little words
And finally start helping these people?

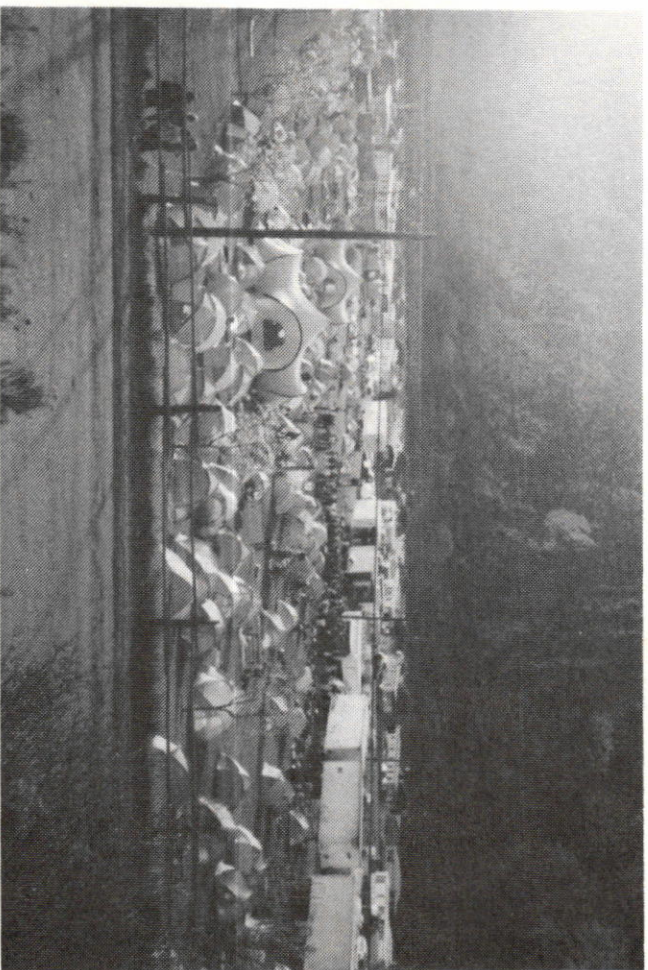
In the House of Others

Do I belong in this place?
I was born to a different life
Yet here I sit
In the house of others
Who speak, as do my own
And others' own
Of peace
Of love
Of sacrifice, sorrow and hope
Yes, I belong in this place
As others belong in my house
And others in the homes of others
We are not one
We are billions
Let that be the beauty of the world



City of Peace

City of peace, I love you at night
 I love your screaming, crying, giggling children
 I love the constant *rrroar* of your overworked kitchen
 I love the zzzip of tent zippers during late-night potty runs
 The conversation of those who savor this quiet
 opportunity for communication
 I love the soft strums of guitars
 The pretty hum of a flute
 The gentle voice of a lullaby singer
 And later, the deep-breathing of your deep, caring commonfolk
 Especially now, you're a City of Peace



STANDOFF ON CORNER, NEW YORK

Keep trying, if you like.
 I'll listen and respect you.
 Are you listening to me?
 I'm talking about, hoping for, working toward peace.
 So often, people argue with me as representatives of God.
 Do you *hear* yourselves?
 Would God pit one against another?
 Has God told you the Russians are to be forever mistrusted?
 Does God approve of 54,000 nuclear weapons on this precious Earth?
 Military spending?
 Radiation?
 Dealing from non-trust?
 Keep trying, if you must.
 I must work for peace.



pittsburgh

On a grey expanse of bridge
O'er the water, near the city of steel
Where the billboards hide the trees
As their slogans make appeal

With a voice that sounded distant
On a day that felt like rain
She spoke softly of her mother
But she never mentioned pain

In a moment dark and tender
Music floating off a stage
We were touching, gently touching
I went strolling through her memories
And I stumbled on my rage

Chernobyl

They talked about it
They said, "big" and "huge"
I thought, "tragic" and "sad"
They said, "estimates" and "destruction"
I thought, "families" and "friends"
They said, "accident"
I whispered, "NO!"



Keliwoman

She is the knowledge of looking at life
Balanced by silly and passionate play
Ocean whose waves crash and tickle my face
How did we ever end up in this place?

How less important than *what* we will be
I can be changed when she's laughing with me
Laughter, the key to the game that we play
Life is the game, love is what we convey

This, an example of friends at their best
Questioned, I'm confident she would attest
Circumstance plays with this wonderful pair
Comfort in having the other one there

We will be silly and we will be close
We will share intimate things, I suppose
Warm, when upon me she carelessly leans
This is what liking a friend truly means

Feminist Politics

Hey Mister President, I want to understand
Is weaponry the proof that you're a caring, peaceful man?
Have men like you forgotten there are women, girls and boys
Who share your world and suffer as you play with deadly toys?

Women? Yeah, remember? They're the carriers of life.
The poor among them suffer from your budget-slashing knife.
The single ones with children struggle daily for survival
As you prepare for war the way you learned it from the Bible.

A book some use to justify their military plans
We guess things from our readings when they're hard to understand
The eye for eye and tooth for tooth is one which serves us well
It buys your friends Ferraris and your enemies their hell

Hey wait! I've got a great idea! Why don't we all trade places?
Have women rule on guns and bombs and military bases!
On whether we should threaten folks or try to talk things out!
On war, the economics game your friends can't live without.

I wonder if a female prez would prolong these conditions
If war would be the way with women making these decisions
If someday, we would fin'ly see that wars are never won
"Quick! Someone shut him up before he spoils all the fun!"



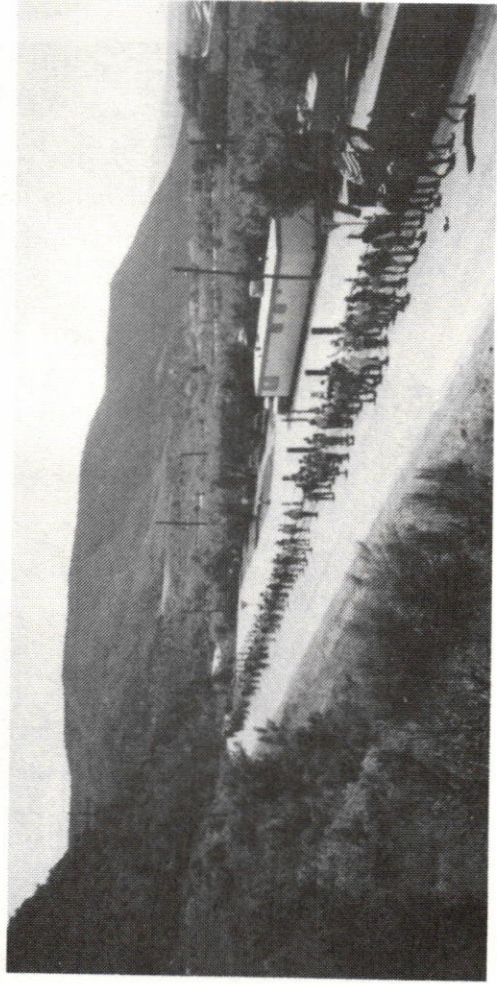
As the Train Rolls by

In your hand must your hat be tightly clutched
For the breeze blows strong as the train rolls by
Take the other from your pocket and you will be touched
For the hands reach out as the train rolls by

You will know we are near by the bell that peals
For the bell rings loud as the train rolls by
There's a path you can follow that our smoke reveals
For the smoke rises proudly as the train rolls by

We've a cargo of forward-thinking souls
With a goal that weapons cease
We've no burning coals, but the train still rolls
It is fueled by our hope for peace

We will reach new grounds with the tracks we lay
We will pick up passengers on the way
And the world we love may live or die
By the choices made as the train rolls by



chicago

Riding the bus past the sad, broken neighborhoods of the big city,
I want to understand. The money is there, right? Isn't it? These are
people living in this city, aren't they? What do we love? We have
forgotten. People. Loving, struggling, proud, forgotten people. Old
women walk the crumbling sidewalks. Dirty clothes, dirty selves.
Eyes seem to search, but they aren't searching. They know. They have
been forgotten. Buildings barely stand. Broken bricks strain to hold
tight to the disintegrating mortar as they prepare to fall from lack of
repair. From being old. From being forgotten.

Quickly! Quickly! Over the streets, the buildings, the houses and
cars. Out of the city, far away, far away! To the quiet countryside,
where billion-dollar plutonium victims point to the sky and cry,
"DON'T PUSH THAT BUTTON!"



Untitled

Peace

Oh, be gentle with it
One may touch upon it
One can never touch it
Peace is a snowflake
Dancing to the Earth
See and appreciate its beauty
Peace is constant effort toward
Openness and understanding
A gift, a *gift*
Fragile as the snowflake
More beautiful than anything
The senses will ever know
Stop running long enough to seize the principle



A Balance

I'm being nourished by various sources
Compliments coming from many directions
Honest and heartfelt, and all are reflections
Of what I can give when I nurture my talents

If, from my heart, my art rarely divorces
If I'm consistent in faith and believing
If there's a gift that, in turn, I'm receiving
It comes in the form of achieving a balance



...and when she laughs...

...and when she laughs...
sometimes, I think she hasn't laughed
so hard or so sincerely
since she was a child
too young to know hurt
Do I do that for her?

...and she's so funny...
my laughs shake my heart
her eyes make me warm
even as a memory

...and when we touch...

I won't get so mushy-she doesn't like it
when we touch, I feel *well*
when we touch, I feel *nice*
when we touch, I feel

I Lost a Friend (for Cynthia)

I lost a friend
We lost one
Few of us knew her
I didn't, but I cared
Few seemed to want to try
To remember, to ponder, to cry

She was one of our army
A warrior with words
Young soldier
Young and gone

And they danced
They laughed and they sang

I don't know
Perhaps that's just their way
Of dealing with dying and death
If not

If they were only protecting themselves
How sad in my mind
To let go the chance
To let go our friend
In loving thought and remembrance



SALT LAKE

(marcher-in-the-home)

Sit in the warmth of this family home
Look into eyes that are honest and true
Know in these days you will not be alone
For the love of these people will journey with you

We're from Olympia, we're from L.A.
Travelers guided by voices within
Buffalo, Brooklyn, Detroit, San Jose
We are here in Salt Lake with our newly-found kin

We were not scheduled as part of their lives
Could not have known we would meet on our way
Fortunate folk who found friends at the roadside are we,
And we gather in peace on this day

Onto the path with our mission in mind
Tearful good-byes, half this family departs
None of our loved ones will be left behind
For the joy of this place will remain in our hearts

Rhoda and Gene, keeping Shakespeare alive
Richard sits high in the truck that he drives
Tracey's intelligence shines in debates
Alex, with whom I share space for our crates

James, a provider of good, common sense
Katea, who's in charge of our special events
Noel made us laugh from a stage in Salt Lake
Jeannine, with the lunch when we reach our third break

Darius backrubs as we walk along
Jeff-Free expresses through word and through song
Laura and Mike keep us at the right pace
Mark paints a peace sign that covers his face

Chris, Mark, Elizabeth, media stars
Georgia breaks loose to our music in bars
Windle's walk-person is always too loud
Saweda's song is what peace is about

So many mentioned, and they and the others
Now will be thought of as sisters and brothers
Never has one who has often known bliss
Lived with the joy I am living in this

You are my family here on the road
Will be forever, I know that is true
I am improving each day we are here
And my friends, I am thankful for being with you



Why are we Walking?

WHY ARE WE WALKING?

Because we're frustrated
No one seems to be listening

WHY ARE WE WALKING?

To see the beautiful land during all stages
To almost *be* the land
Without car doors and windows to kill the experience

WHY ARE WE WALKING?

Because otherwise, we'd never have met *you*
Or been able to draw from your love
Or learn from your kindness

WHY ARE WE WALKING?

Because each step drives home a point
To ourselves and to the world:
NO MORE NUCLEAR WEAPONS
Peace.



Shelley, all night I could watch while you dance
Ginny, you make me feel good with a glance
Sam Wolfe, who helped me by lending a dollar
Franklin, a trooper, a friend and a scholar

Will helped with laundry by driving the bus
Dangerous volleyball player named Gus
Kathy and Chris, master chefs and great dancers
Info-com Dave, who has all of the answers

Jay-Jay, the congaman borrowed from Boulder
Mo, at the test-site I cried on her shoulder
Dan, with his masterful spoof of CV
PaulRoy, how mellow can two brothers be?

Dewey on drums, when he's not cracking eggs
Born-again hippie, who's testing his legs
Marek, who shared all the stuff his aunt sent
Judy and Barbara, who carpet their tent

Frank, always patiently pushing his bike
Harleigh, who recently learned to say "Mike"
Kath and Elizabeth, filming this trek
Jack from Hawaii, a pain in the neck

Shessa massages the kinks in our bodies
Geoff has been gracious in cleaning our potties
BJ's worked hard on our traveling plans
Donna and crew clean our pots and our pans

Yoli

Soft and sweet, she slowly moves
She's silently begun
Slowed one million times
She's like the rising of the sun
Fortunate are those who come to know the love she gives
They will share the wisdom and the warmth with which she lives
Moments when she drifts amid my thoughts I see her face
Even in her absence, I can feel her subtle grace
What a place and time to be, and we have just begun
Seize the opportunity to see her rising sun

Chris, who's a regular "Basketball Jones"
Dan, who is always the first to the phones
Missy, I missed while she hung out in jail
Val, please explain why I'm getting no mail

Jerry, who stirs me whenever he speaks
Michael, who swims in the brownest of creeks
Kathy, who helped when we plead for a ban
Irene, who's mastered the ultimate tan

Kim from K.C. shares a great conversation
Kimba I thank for my hair alteration
Dave I owe cookies, don't think I've forgotten
Lorna and Chuck both have treated me rotten

Kirstin and Sonia inspire through dance
Kim, Lee, Denee-All have worked on advance
Gordon, so helpful way back in L.A.
Jessie, you're special! What more can I say?

Imka and Barbara and Trish working kitchen
Michael, who's always been willing to pitch in
Mary and Diane, now our parents have met
Sally, I'll get you to quit smoking yet

Kevin and Karen, two-thirds of a trio
Short-order chef known as Stephen Carillo
Angie, who's often seen rubbing sore feet
Mooch, who's like me, always begging to eat



An Open Letter to my Marcher Friends

This is a letter to my marcher friends
Open to others if curious to hear
Of what it is like to be lucky enough
To hold recent strangers so near and so dear

Keli and Yoli, I met the first day
Louis, who picks up tin cans on the way
Liz, whose soft hugs have improved with much practice
Joanie, I met while surrounded by cactus

Michael, so silly and thankfully so
Doug, who's the king of the friendly "hello!"
Shirley, who gives me so much inspiration
Lori, who's rubs leave a tingling sensation

Ames and Lorraine, both so fun and so nice
(Amy's a sucker for leftover rice)
Darryl, performing as my other half
Neicy, the great, unmistakable laugh

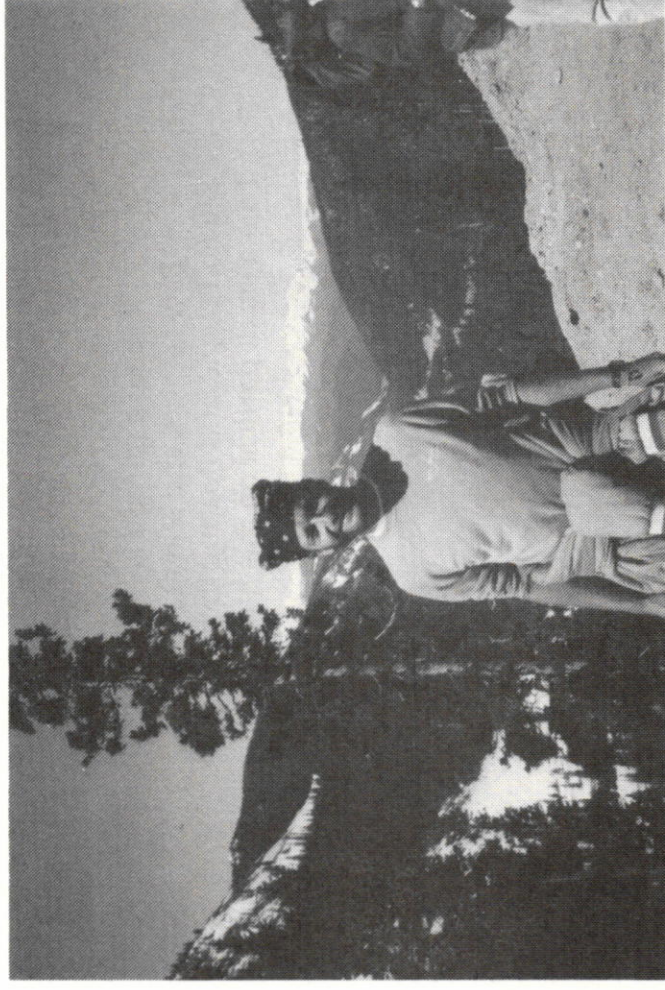
Gordon, who toils at tables each day
Bo, who's the glue in the music we play
Freda, my surrogate mom as we walk
Laura, who teaches each time that we talk

Brenda, as warm as the sun is at noon
Trace, who injects R&B in each tune
Timothy, master of music and rhyme
Dan, who has captured these moments in time

Tom, my tall tentmate, who takes too much space
Dwarka, who cooks so I may stuff my face
Dave, by the board so we get the right sound
Jo, we're all lucky to have you around

9/23/86

I'm not sure
I could be wrong
But I *think* what I *might* like most about myself
Is that I rarely can make up my mind



a blade of grass

Have you ever looked at the soil and seen it through?
From a blade of grass in a field of mud,
Straight through to the core of this planet?
What a miracle is this!
Packed hard and soft and solid
Big and round and floating through space
I am a small particle on this huge expanse
I am a miracle!



Amish country

Trees and rain
Clouds and wind
The leaves sail gently to the grass and ground
I smile
I breathe
I swallow
Life within
Life without
Beauty



Friendship's Fire

Friendship's fire
And the warmth of friends
Burst forth from a spark
Igniting the dry wood
Untapped emotions can become
It can burn many ways
Suddenly or gradually
Fiercely or gently
Continuously, constantly
Or for a short time
Flames always flicker and fade
Not so with friends
The fuel of friendship often flows
Unlike wood that cracks and crumbles
As this evening's fire dies
I watch its last, loving light
Touch her sleeping face
And see it as a sign
Of friendship, everburning



THEY DID NOTHING

The bombs were being built and tested
They did nothing
The leaders of their lands were speaking
Threateningly
Of possible destruction
They did nothing
Their newspapers and radios and televisions told tales
Of heightening tension
Stalled talks
Possible actions
They did nothing
A few spoke out and tried to inspire
Few heard
Fewer listened
Most did nothing
And in the 15 minutes before the end of the world
They wept and
screamed
and knew in their hearts they didn't deserve this
horrible fate

For they did nothing



an omaha rug

There we were in Omaha
Me, with my sad, romantic music on cassette
And my stories of life on the road
You, at thirty-two,
Bearing some difficult pieces of your life's puzzle
Thrown...no, placed together
Delicately
To let ourselves know, through conversation
Where our lives had come
And gone
And in which directions they were headed
We danced slowly, alone
Not alone
South American Jazz
Listening intently
To the current that flowed between and
Within us
Silently speaking, singing, sighing

O, the years that passed in a moment's time
The memories that crept through a woman's eyes
And into the music that played one night
As we danced on an Omaha Rug

Morning Realization

Good morning to the sun, shine or no
It gives light to the earth below
Its light is good
The earth is good
I'm thankful for these gifts
Good morning to the soul I am
I love that I am here to live
And here to share
And take
And give
A gem among these miracles

